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Grand Baby Show. 1836.

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BOSTON

Walter H. Baker

THE GRAND BABY SHOW.

CHARACTERS.

ONE BOY, *taking the part of Judge.*

TWENTY-THREE LITTLE GIRLS, *taking the parts of Mothers.*

COSTUMES.

THE JUDGE wears an ordinary suit, a white tie and a button-hole bouquet.

THE MOTHERS may be dressed in pink cambric, or cheese cloth. Dresses made "Mother Hubbard" style, with full puffed sleeves. A kerchief around the neck. Bonnets of white tissue paper or cambric with broad strings of same, tied in large bow at the side. A bunch of pink paper roses in the front. Mothers carry on left arm a doll. One mother carries two dolls, supposed to be twins, one on each arm. The dolls may be dressed as infants, in long white dresses and caps.

No scenery is necessary, a platform only being required.



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THE GRAND BABY SHOW.

Judge (*enters and speaks*). Ladies and Gentlemen: I am sure you have often heard of a baby show to which all the fond mothers from far and near bring their little darlings, dressed in their prettiest. Well, we are going to have just such an exhibition here this evening. A handsome gold locket and chain will be given to the beauty of the show. The most amusing part of the entertainment is that each proud mamma thinks her own babe the handsomest, and expects to get the prize. Only one among all the eager mothers that come here this evening will be made happy, while the rest will be most indignant and consider their beautiful darlings slighted. The audience will please keep perfectly quiet, because babies are easily frightened, and many of the little cherubs that are to be on exhibition this evening have never been away from home before. I promise you this is to be the grandest baby show ever given.

[**JUDGE** stands aside to left as **MOTHERS** enter from right, singing "We Come," etc. One of the **MOTHERS** is leader, the others follow in twos. The leader carries the baby that is to receive the prize. All march round the stage once, to centre of rear, then to the front, where leader stands, her back to audience. Couples separate and form a circle right and left of leader, march in circles two or three times. Leader faces the audience as the last couple separate, and stands in centre, marking time with feet during the march; after third circle is made, first couple take places, one at right and the other at left of leader. All follow until a semicircle is formed. Sing once more, "We Come," etc., keeping step with music; at "darling babies," raise dolls. At last words of song, bow. **JUDGE** stands partly facing **MOTHERS** during march.]

Mothers (*all sing as follows during march*):

WE COME, WE COME.



We come, we come, we come To the famous Ba - by Show ;



We come, we come, we come To the famous Ba - by Show ;



Our ba - bies are so sweet, Dressed so pretty and so neat ;



Happy mammas, darling ba-bies, Just as sweet as they can be.

[The verse may be repeated as many times as necessary, during the marching.]

Judge (at close of song and march). Yes, indeed, these are the sweetest babies I have ever seen ; and I perceive that the audience admires them, too. But, dear ladies, these precious little darlings must be a great care to you. Will you not tell us about them ?

Mothers (recite, sorrowfully).

Oh yes ! oh yes ! at dark of night
Our babies often call,
And we must wake and care them,
But we love them for it all.

[Love babies.]

They are such precious little pets,
We dance them up so high,
Their eyes shine just as brightly
As the stars up in the sky.

[Dance babies.]

[Point up.]

Come, darlings, come, 'tis time to sleep.

[Shake finger and pretend to fix for a nap.]

No, no, you must not cry,
But hear your mamma singing
A pretty lullaby.

Mothers (sing as follows) :

SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP.



Sleep, baby, sleep, you must not, must not weep ;
 I've hung your pretty clothes in tidy little rows ;
 Upon the nurs'ry wall there's room for babes and all.
 Sleep, baby, sleep ; sleep, baby, sleep.

[During this verse turn doll's face to breast, and pat on shoulder, as if putting a baby to sleep.]

Wake, baby, wake, too long a nap you take ;
 Now open your pretty eyes, so lovely and so wise,
 And shake your pretty curs, like all the other girls.

[Shake doll playfully.]

Wake, baby, wake ; wake, baby, wake.

[To be sung a little faster than first verse ; hold baby by waist, look into its face as if waking a baby.]

Walk, baby, walk, and sweetly, sweetly talk,
 I'll wash your precious face, and take you every place,
 To see the flowers grow, and hear the wild winds blow.
 Walk, baby, walk—walk, baby, walk.

[Hold babies under their arms, face out, and stoop down as if making a baby walk from right to left ; second line take babies up, pretend to wash their faces ; last line same as first.]

Love, baby, love—yes, love the God above ;
 He made both you and me : and love me, baby, too,
 And very good, we'll be so good, both you and me.
 Love, baby, love—love, baby, love.

[While singing this, hold dolls lovingly to left side of face ; look up, and at the word "God," point. At last word put doll on left arm. All the gestures should be made in time to the singing. In the first verse, the patting. In the second, the shaking. In the third, walking, washing, etc.]

Judge. Indeed, these are wonderful babies !
 How happy you mammas must be !
 To decide among so many beauties
 Will be difficult now, I can see.

[MOTHERS all straighten up, hold babies as if showing them to audience ; at word " mine," bow.

Mothers. I am sure *mine* will get the prize.

Mother of Twins (*walks up proudly and shows babies*).

See Lily sweet, and Marguerite,
 They're lovely as you see ;
 If Lily does not win the prize,
 For Marguerite 'twill be.

Judge. They are the prettiest twins in —.

[*Insert place of performance.*

[MOTHER OF TWINS *returns to her place, swaying her skirts.* JUDGE *then goes to centre, glances up and down at all babies, throws up his hands.*

Judge. O, such darling little babies ! No wonder your dear mammas are proud of you.

[MOTHERS *smooth babies' dresses, fix their hair as if trying to show them off to best advantage.* JUDGE *goes around in search of the beauty, admires all. A great deal of pretty talk can be put in, but the brightest MOTHERS should be chosen for it.*

Judge (*to MOTHER OF TWINS*). O, those lovely twins ! you must be the happy mother.

Mother of Twins. And so I am. Will you give a locket and chain to each of them ?

Judge. You must be patient, madam. I haven't looked at all the babies yet.

[MOTHER OF TWINS *leaves her place, and follows JUDGE, at times walking backwards, always holding her babies up to him as if to take his attention from the others.*

One Mother. See my sweet little baby. Won't you kiss her ? I think she'll get the prize.

Judge. O, then I would have to kiss all, or the other dear mammas would be jealous.

Another Mother. My little pet has never been away from home before. Her aunts say that she will get the prize.

Judge. O, she looks just like her mamma.

Another Mother. Did you ever see a prettier baby ? She has flaxen hair and large, dark eyes. Every one of our neighbors say she will get the prize.

Judge. The neighbors may be right.

[MOTHER kisses baby and dances her up.

Judge (taking baby from one of the mothers). What a chubby little dot he is ! How old is he ?

Mother. Just six months. His name is Claude ; he looks like his papa. I think he is the handsomest babe here.

[More conversation similar to the above between JUDGE and MOTHERS may be added, if desired. MOTHER OF TWINS takes her place in semicircle ; JUDGE having looked at all the babies, passes to centre of semicircle, where leader stands, pauses, takes her by the hand, leads her towards front.

Mother of Prize Baby. O, is my baby going to get the prize ?

Judge. I'll see about that ; I must show your handsome infant to the audience.

All the Mothers (as leader steps to the front, the other MOTHERS, who are anxiously bending forward, holding babies on left arm, and catching dress at side with right hand, step back quickly and look disappointed, saying together). Oh !

[Prolonged.

Judge. Well, well ! In my opinion this is by far the handsomest babe. I appeal to all this select audience to say if I am not right. (Pauses.) Yes, yes, you all think so. (Takes prize baby ; holds it up to audience.) Such handsome eyes ! Such a cute little nose. And did you ever see such a rosebud of a mouth ? Just sweet enough to kiss ! (Kisses baby.) Yes, madam, the prize is awarded to your baby. He is the handsomest.

[JUDGE hands baby to MOTHER ; puts chain on it.

MOTHER hugs and kisses baby. MOTHER OF TWINS runs up to JUDGE, holds her babies up to his face.

Mother of Twins. Oh ! Did you forget my sweet little twins ?

Judge. By no means, madam ; only one can get the prize.

[Shakes finger in MOTHER'S face at word "one."

Mother of Twins. What will their papa say ? He thought one of the twins would surely get the prize.

[Said very slowly and mournfully.

Mother of Prize Baby.

I know what darling pa will say—

"My handsome baby Joe." [Pats baby's face.

No wonder he would get the prize

At the famous "Baby Show."

[Holds baby up at word "he" ; bow at last word.

Mother of Twins (to MOTHER OF PRIZE BABY). I have two

babies, and they are both handsomer than your Joe. (*To audience.*) I'll never, never go to another baby show.

[*Said very indignantly; returns to her place in semicircle.*]

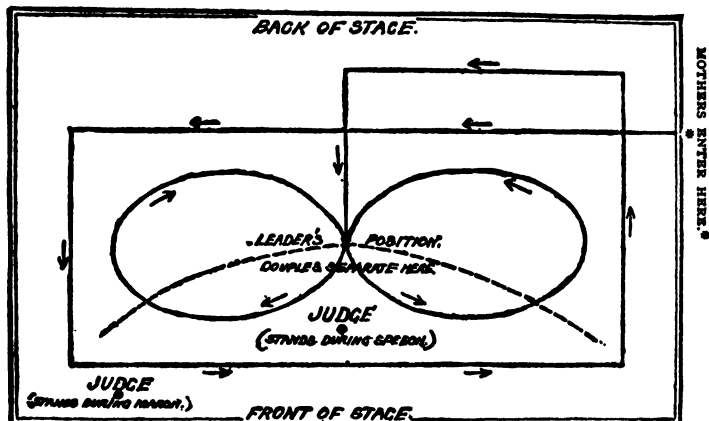
[JUDGE goes to left side of stage. MOTHER OF PRIZE BABY stands in centre, caressing baby. All MOTHERS lower babies. Some carry them by their arms, others let them hang down carelessly, and march in circles right and left of leader, then join partners, march down centre, around stage once, and out, singing "We'll Never, Never Go," etc., stamping feet at words italicized. MOTHER OF PRIZE BABY marches off last, with JUDGE for partner; throws kiss to audience as she passes centre of stage. On a large stage it may be necessary to repeat "We'll Never, Never Go," three or four times.]

SONG:—"WE'LL NEVER, NEVER GO" (*to the air of "We Come, We Come"*).

We'll never, never go
To another baby show,
We'll never, never go
To another baby show,
We'll never, never go
To another baby show,
Never, never, never, never,
Never, never, will we go. [*All go off stage.*]

DIAGRAM

(*Showing line of march.*)



☛ The dotted lines show position of children after the march.

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MRS. MUIRHEAD.

MIKE, *Ted's dog.*

The part of Ted, who is supposed to be nine years old, may be very effectively played by an older boy of small stature, by a girl or by a child.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Mr. Wellman's Library, New York. An evening in June.

ACT II. Farm Spring Hotel, Canada. Two days later.

ACT III. Same as Act II. A few minutes later.

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